

**REQUEST
FOR
PROPOSAL
NO. 2021-03**

**Alabama Department of Corrections
Public Relations and
Issues Management Services**

**Alabama Department of Corrections
Office of the Commissioner
301 South Ripley Street
Montgomery, AL 36104**

December 1, 2021

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

The Alabama Department of Corrections (“ADOC”) announces this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) to all eligible and interested parties for the opportunity to submit a proposal, in accordance with the requirements herein. The ADOC is soliciting proposals for a third-party contractor to provide and deliver to the ADOC: public information and public relations services and communications assistance and consultation; public involvement and community relations services on selected projects and other thematic campaigns; marketing plans; and assistance with statewide/regional campaigns and issues. These services are sought to support the Department’s recruitment initiatives and public relations engagements, transparency with and response to stakeholders, and defense of pending or threatened litigation. You are invited to submit a response in accordance with the requirements specified in this RFP.

Proposals to provide these services must be received in the ADOC Commissioner’s Office by **4:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, on January 13, 2022**. Packages must be clearly marked as “ADOC RFP 2021-03: Public Relations and Issues Management Services.”

1.1 Purpose of RFP

The purpose of this procurement is to establish a contract for public relations, issues management, communication, and marketing services to be provided in conjunction with, and under the direction of, the ADOC via its Public Information Office (“PIO”) or other designee.

1.2 Definitions

“ADOC,” “DOC,” or “Department” – the Alabama Department of Corrections.

Authorized Representative – any person or entity duly authorized and designated in writing to act for and on behalf of a party to this agreement or resulting contract, which designation has been furnished to all the parties herein.

Contract – the document containing terms agreed to by the ADOC and Selected Vendor for the provision of services sought in this RFP, to include any future amendments thereto.

RFP – this Request for Proposal, together with all amendments and addenda thereto.

Selected Vendor – the qualified corporation, legal entity, or individual chosen by the ADOC to negotiate a contract for the services listed in this RFP.

STAARS – State of Alabama Accounting and Resource Systems.

Standards – industry best practices and all applicable federal and state laws, constitutional requirements, court orders and settlement agreements, and ADOC policies and procedures. If there is a conflict between any of these and this RFP or the awarded contract, the more stringent shall apply, as determined by the ADOC.

State – the State of Alabama or the Alabama Department of Corrections (these terms may be used interchangeably).

Vendor – any corporation or legal entity qualified under Alabama law to respond to this RFP.

1.3 Responsibility to Read and Understand

By responding to this solicitation, Vendor will be held to have read and thoroughly examined this RFP. Failure to read and thoroughly examine this RFP will not excuse any failure to comply with the requirements of this RFP or any Contract, nor will such failure be a basis for claiming additional compensation. If Vendor suspects an error, omission, or discrepancy in this solicitation, or if Vendor has questions regarding this RFP, Vendor must notify Ms. Mary-Coleman Roberts, ADOC's Single Point of Contact, **by 4:00 p.m. CST on December 10, 2021**, as provided in Sections 5.1(c) and 5.7 of this RFP. The ADOC will issue written instructions, if appropriate, by **December 17, 2021**. The written responses will be posted to the ADOC website, www.doc.alabama.gov/RequestForProposals.

1.4 Reservations

The ADOC reserves the following rights: (1) to reject all proposals; (2) to reject individual proposals for failure to meet any requirement; and (3) to waive minor defects. The ADOC may seek clarification of the proposal from Vendor at any time, and failure of the Vendor to respond is cause for rejection. Clarification is not an opportunity to change the proposal. The submission of a proposal confers on Vendor no right of selection or to a subsequent contract. This process is for the benefit of the ADOC only and is to provide the ADOC with competitive information to assist in the selection process. All decisions on compliance, evaluation, terms, and conditions will be made solely at the discretion of the ADOC and made to favor the State.

1.5 Cost of Preparation

The ADOC is not responsible for, and will not pay any costs associated with, the preparation and submission of Vendor's proposal regardless of whether or not Vendor is selected for negotiations. Any costs associated with this procurement will be the responsibility of Vendor and will in no way be charged to the ADOC.

1.6 Vendor Contact

The ADOC will consider the person who signs Vendor's proposal the contact person for all matters pertaining to the proposal unless Vendor designates another person in writing.

1.7 Opening Date

Vendor proposals will be opened on **January 14, 2022, at 10:00 am**, in the ADOC Legal Conference Room located at 301 South Ripley Street, Montgomery, AL 36104. At the scheduled place and date for the proposal opening, only the names of Vendors who submitted proposals will be announced.

1.8 Evaluation and Selection

The ADOC Evaluation Committee will evaluate all proposals using the criteria outlined in Section 5.9, Evaluation Criteria, and make a recommendation to the Commissioner of the ADOC, who will make the final selection.

1.9 Cost of the Contract

The total cost of the contract shall be a fixed fee for the consultation services, to be utilized at the sole option of the ADOC, and at no time shall it exceed the total cost quoted by Vendor in its proposal.

1.10 Contract Negotiations

Selected Vendor may be required to enter into contract negotiations if the ADOC believes such is necessary or desirable. If an agreement cannot be reached to the satisfaction of the ADOC within thirty (30) days of notification of intent to negotiate, the ADOC may reject Selected Vendor's proposal or revoke the selection and begin negotiations with the next Selected Vendor.

1.11 Entire Agreement

The Contract shall include the provisions in this RFP and any modifications, addendum, or attachments thereto and may include the relevant portions of the Selected Vendor's proposal that are expressly agreed upon and adopted by the ADOC. The Contract must be approved and signed by the appropriately authorized State and ADOC officials.

1.12 Communications

- a) From the date of receipt of notice of this RFP until a binding contractual agreement exists with Selected Vendor, or at such time as the ADOC rejects all proposals, informal communications shall cease. Informal communications shall include, but will not be limited to, requests or communications related to this RFP from any Vendor to any facility, division, or employee of the ADOC, with the exception of the ADOC's Single Point of Contact, for information, comments, or speculation.
- b) From the date of receipt of this RFP until a binding contractual agreement exists with Selected Vendor, or at such time as the ADOC rejects all proposals, all communications regarding this RFP between the ADOC and the Vendors will be formal, as provided in this RFP or as requested by the ADOC. Formal Communications shall include, but will not be limited to:
 - 1) Written Requests for Clarification/Information, consistent with Sections 5.1(c) and 5.7;
 - 2) Oral Presentations; or
 - 3) Negotiations.
- c) All formal inquiries for information should be directed to the Single Point of Contact, Ms. Mary-Coleman Roberts, by email at MaryColeman.Roberts@doc.alabama.gov and include in the subject line "RFP 2021-03: Public Relations and Issues Management Services."

- d) Failure to comply with this provision could result in disqualification of Vendor from continuing in this process.

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SECTION II

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

2.1 Proposal Conditions

- a) By signing a proposal, Vendor agrees to be bound by all terms and conditions of this RFP. Any exceptions to the specified terms and conditions must be clearly set forth within Vendor's proposal and are subject to the acceptance of the ADOC.
- b) All vendor proposals will remain firm and unaltered for ninety (90) days after the proposal due date shown or until a contract is fully executed with Vendor, whichever is earlier. An exception to the criterion will be if Vendor is engaged in contract negotiations. That Vendor will then be allowed to make proposal modification(s), only in accordance with a request by the ADOC.
- c) Vendor's provision of services must comply with all industry standards and other standards as may be defined in ADOC policies and procedures, Administrative Regulations, and directives, as well as applicable court orders, consent decrees, and/or Settlement Agreements.
- d) If any requirement of this RFP exceeds the Standards or requirements as set forth in Section 2.1(c) of this RFP, the requirements of this RFP will prevail. Any exception to this requirement must be specified in the Contract, or through a subsequent written mutual agreement, and be signed by the authorized representative of Selected Vendor and the ADOC.
- e) The State of Alabama may make such reasonable investigations as deemed proper and necessary to determine the ability of Vendor to perform the services, and Vendor shall furnish to the State all such information and data for this purpose as may be requested. The State further reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigations of, such Vendor fails to satisfy the State that such Vendor is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the awarded contract and to provide the services contemplated therein.
- f) Vendors may be asked to submit further financial information to prove financial responsibility. Any such financial responsibility documents will be kept confidential if a "REDACTED" copy is also submitted, as provided in Section 5.2(c)(4), unless otherwise required by law.
- g) Upon the award of, or the announcement of the decision to award, a contract, the ADOC will inform Selected Vendor in writing.
- h) Only the final results of the ADOC Evaluation Committee may be considered public. Any work papers, individual evaluator or consultant comments, notes, or scores do not reflect final action(s) taken by the State and will not be considered public. The final results of the ADOC Evaluation Committee and any proposals received in response to this RFP will not be publicly available until a final Contract has received all necessary approvals.
- i) The ADOC reserves the right to modify the requirements of this RFP or the resulting Contract by: (1) changing the operational requirements or time frames; (2) adding or deleting tasks to be performed or equipment to be provided; and/or (3) making any other modification deemed necessary by the ADOC.

- j) Any changes in Vendor's proposed system or pricing in response to an ADOC request, as provided in Section 2.1(i), are subject to acceptance by the ADOC. In the event price changes or proposed service changes in response to an ADOC request are not acceptable to the ADOC, Selected Vendor's pre-award status may be rescinded. At the option of the ADOC, another selection for pre-award may be made from Vendors that submitted a proposal, or the ADOC may open the process to re-negotiations based upon the new specifications.
- h) Deadlines and other critical dates in this RFP have been provided in Attachment D. For any discrepancies between Attachment D and the dates included in this RFP, Attachment D will prevail. Failure to strictly adhere to these deadlines and other critical dates may result in disqualification of Vendor.

2.2 Contract Terms

- a) The Contract will be comprised of this RFP, relevant portions of the Selected Vendor's proposal that are expressly adopted by the ADOC, and any changes or modifications made during the negotiation process. The contract, including any attachments, will constitute the entire contract between Selected Vendor and the ADOC. The executed contract and any renewal thereof are subject to review and approval by the Contract Review Permanent Legislative Oversight Committee and the Governor of the State of Alabama. Modifications and waivers must be in writing and signed or approved by authorized representatives of Selected Vendor and the ADOC to be binding. Amendments or modifications may also be subject to review and approval, in accordance with State Law.
- b) No interpretation of any provision of this RFP or the Contract, including applicable specifications, is binding on the ADOC unless furnished or agreed to in writing by the ADOC.
- c) The length of the Contract shall be two (2) years with three (3) mutually agreed upon one (1) year renewal options. The total Contract, including any renewal, may not exceed five (5) years. If the commencement of performance is delayed because the ADOC does not execute the Contract on the start date, the ADOC may change the start date, end date, and milestones to reflect the delayed execution.
- d) The ADOC will not be liable to pay Vendor for any supplies provided, services performed, or expenses paid related to the Contract incurred prior to the beginning of, or after the ending of, the term of the contract.
- e) Any work or service performed on State premises will be done through coordination with ADOC personnel and will, in any event, be performed so as to minimize inconvenience to the ADOC and its personnel and minimize interference with the operation of any ADOC facility.
- f) Selected Vendor will be responsible for the payment of any and all applicable state, county, municipal, and federal taxes, including sales tax, and any other taxes imposed by other governmental entities so authorized.
- g) Vendor covenants that it has disclosed to the ADOC, and agrees it is under a continuing obligation to disclose, financial or other interests (public or private, direct or indirect) that may be a potential conflict of interest or that may conflict in any manner with Vendor's obligations

under the Contract. Vendor covenants that it will not employ any person with a conflict to perform under the Contract. Vendor further covenants that no person has an interest in Vendor or in the Contract that would violate Alabama law.

- h) The Contract shall not be assignable by Vendor, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the ADOC. Any agreement to assign any portion of the Agreement shall not constitute a waiver by the ADOC to consent to any subsequent assignments.
- i) Selected Vendor shall be an independent contractor. Selected Vendor, its agents, sub-vendor(s), and employee(s) will not be considered to be agent(s), distributor(s), or representative(s) of the ADOC. Neither Selected Vendor nor any employees of Selected Vendor will be entitled to participate in any retirement or pension plan, group insurance program, or other programs designed to benefit employees of the ADOC or under the Alabama State Merit System Act.
- j) Selected Vendor, who executes the Contract for service, is contractually responsible for the total performance of the Contract. Subcontracting may be allowable at the sole discretion of the ADOC, but must be disclosed as a part of the proposal or otherwise approved in advance by the ADOC. Any approval by the ADOC of any subcontract or subcontractor shall not constitute a waiver by the ADOC to consent or approve any other subcontract or subcontractor. Any subcontract shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) Any sub-vendor providing services required in this RFP or in the awarded Contract will meet or exceed the requirements set forth within.
 - 2) The ADOC will not be bound to any terms and conditions included in any Vendor or sub-vendor documents. No conditions in sub-vendor documents in variance with, or in addition to, the requirements of this RFP or the awarded contract will in any way affect Selected Vendor's obligations under the contract resulting from this RFP.
- k) Selected Vendor will remain fully responsible for the negligent acts and omissions of its agents, employees, and/or sub-vendors in their performance of Selected Vendor's duties under the Contract. Selected Vendor represents that it will utilize the services of individuals skilled in the profession for which they will be used in performing services hereunder. In the event the ADOC determines that any individual performing services for Selected Vendor is not providing such skilled services, the ADOC will promptly notify Selected Vendor and Selected Vendor will replace that individual.
- l) Selected Vendor, or its employees who perform services requiring a license, permit, or certification, will have and maintain said required licenses, permits, or certifications.
- m) If Selected Vendor is unable to secure or maintain individuals named in the Contract to render the services set forth in the Contract, Selected Vendor will not be relieved of its obligation to complete performance. The ADOC, however, will have the option to terminate the Contract upon written notice to Selected Vendor.
- n) Selected Vendor will consult with, and keep the ADOC fully informed as to, the progress of all matters covered by the Contract. Selected Vendor will promptly furnish the ADOC with copies of all correspondence and all documents prepared in connection with the services rendered under the Contract. Upon request, Selected Vendor will arrange, index, and deliver all

correspondence and documents to the ADOC.

- o) Selected Vendor will be required to comply with any audits and/or inspections by the ADOC and to explain deviations from the services outlined in the resulting Contract. Failure to correct, or take reasonable steps to correct, any issues noted in writing within a reasonable time period, may result in a notice of a breach of contract, as set forth in Section 2.2(z) of this RFP.
- p) Upon request, Selected Vendor will meet with the ADOC for the purpose of reviewing Selected Vendor's performance under the Contract. Selected Vendor will be asked to explain deviations, discuss problems, and mutually agree upon a course of action to improve performance.
- q) All documents, materials, or data developed as a result of work under the Contract will be the property of the ADOC. The ADOC will have the right to use and reproduce any documents, materials, and data, including confidential information, used in or developed as a result of Selected Vendor's work under the Contract. The ADOC may use this information for its own purposes. Selected Vendor is required to have the rights to utilize any documents, materials, or data provided by Selected Vendor to fulfill requirements of this RFP. Selected Vendor will keep confidential all documents, materials, and data prepared or developed by Selected Vendor or supplied by the ADOC.
- r) Selected Vendor will supply all billings, records, evidence of services performed, or other documents as may be required for review and audit by the ADOC. Licensed materials, used as a part of fulfilling the requirements of the Contract, will be considered a trade secret to Licensors, provided that such materials are marked "confidential" or in such a way that the ADOC can reasonably determine that they are licensed.
- s) Selected Vendor and its sub-vendors will maintain books and records related to the performance of the Contract or any subcontract and necessary to support amounts charged to the ADOC in accordance with applicable law, terms and conditions of the Contract, and generally accepted accounting practices. Selected Vendor will maintain these books and records for a minimum of three (3) years after the completion of the Contract, final payment, or completion of any contract audit or litigation, whichever is later. All books and records will be available for review or audit by the ADOC, its representatives, and other governmental entities with monitoring authority upon reasonable notice and during normal business hours. Selected Vendor agrees to cooperate fully with any such review or audit. If any audit indicates overpayment by the ADOC, Selected Vendor will immediately remit all amounts that may be due to the ADOC. Failure to maintain the books and records required by this Section will establish a presumption in favor of the ADOC for the recovery of any funds to the ADOC under the Contract for which adequate books and records are not available to support the purported disbursement.
- t) Billing
 - 1) Vendor shall provide a detailed invoice for the services utilizing one (1) standardized format.
 - 2) The ADOC expects to receive the best value cost and billing terms for the services rendered. The ADOC will pay commissions only when Selected Vendor can demonstrate that payment of commissions would result in a lower cost to the ADOC.
 - 3) Vendor will not bill for any taxes unless a statement is attached to the bill identifying the tax

and showing why it is legally chargeable to the ADOC. If it is determined that taxes are legally chargeable to the ADOC, the ADOC will pay the tax as required. State and federal tax exemption information is available upon request. The ADOC does not warrant that the interest component of any payment, including installment payments to Vendor, is exempt from income tax liability.

- 4) Vendor will be in compliance with applicable tax requirements and will be current in payment of such taxes.
 - 5) Payments delayed by the ADOC at the beginning of the fiscal year because of the appropriation process will not be considered a breach. While the State has not historically delayed payments at the beginning of the fiscal year, such a circumstance will not constitute a breach by the ADOC.
 - 6) The ADOC will not be liable to pay Vendor for any supplies provided, services performed, or expenses due for the supplies and services, subject of the contract, incurred prior to the beginning of, or after the end of, the term of the contract.
 - 7) Payments will be made to conform to State fiscal year requirements notwithstanding any contrary provision in the Contract or order. This may include prorating payments that extend beyond the end of the fiscal year for the ADOC.
 - 8) Vendors must be registered in the State of Alabama Accounting and Resource Systems (STAARS) to receive payment. In order to be listed as a Vendor in STAARS, you must first be registered in Alabama Buys. If you have not registered in Alabama Buys, <https://alabamabuys.gov>, it is recommended that you register your company.
- u) If any term or condition of the Contract is declared void, unenforceable, or against public policy, that term or condition will be ignored and will not affect the remaining terms and conditions of the Contract, and the Contract will be interpreted as far as possible to give effect to the parties' intent.
- v) Changes can be made to the Contract in any of the following ways:
- 1) The parties may agree in writing to modify the scope of the Contract. An increase in the price or extension of time of the contract resulting from such modification or extension shall be agreed to by the parties as a part of their written agreement to modify the scope of the contract and may be subject to the process set forth in Section 2.2(a).
 - 2) The ADOC may order changes within the general scope of the Contract at any time by written notice to Selected Vendor. Changes within the scope of the Contract may include, but are not limited to, modification of the services or programs offered. Selected Vendor shall comply with the notice upon receipt. Selected Vendor shall be allowed to adjust pricing to compensate for any additional costs or savings incurred as the result of such order. Said compensation shall be determined by mutual agreement of the parties in writing and may be subject to the provisions of Section 2.2(a).
- w) It is agreed that the terms and commitments contained herein shall not be constituted as a debt of the State of Alabama in violation of Article 11, Section 213, of the Constitution of Alabama 1901, as amended by Amendment No. 26.

- x) Any dispute arising under, or relating to, the Contract that cannot be informally resolved by the parties will be made in writing and presented to the ADOC for a written decision. The ADOC will issue a written decision on the dispute within thirty (30) days. In the event of any conflict between the Parties regarding the performance of the services according to the specifications of this RFP, the provisions of the resulting Contract will control. Vendor will proceed diligently with performance of the Contract pending final resolution of any request for relief or adjustment, or any dispute or appeal, and will comply with any direction of the ADOC pending such final resolution.
- y) Should the parties still not be able to resolve the matter in accordance with Section 2.2(x), the following provision shall apply. For any and all monetary disputes arising under the terms of this RFP or the Contract, the Selected Vendor's sole remedy is to file a claim with the Board of Adjustments for the State of Alabama. For any and all other disputes arising under the terms of this Agreement, the Parties agree to utilize appropriate forms of non-binding alternative dispute resolution including, but not limited to, mediation (subject, however, at all times to the sovereign immunity of the State). Such dispute resolution shall occur in Montgomery, Alabama, utilizing, where appropriate, mediators selected from the roster of mediators maintained by the Center For Dispute Resolution of the Alabama State Bar.
- z) The ADOC may terminate any Contract resulting from this RFP without penalty to the ADOC, or further payment required, in the event of:
 - 1) Any breach of the Contract that, if susceptible of being cured, is not cured within fifteen (15) days of the ADOC giving notice of breach to Selected Vendor including, but not limited to, failure of Selected Vendor to maintain covenants, representations, warranties, certifications, bonds, and insurance;
 - 2) Commencement of a proceeding by or against Selected Vendor under the United States Bankruptcy Code or similar law, or any action by Selected Vendor to dissolve, merge, or liquidate;
 - 3) Material misrepresentation or falsification of any information provided by Vendor in the course of any dealing between the ADOC and Vendor or between Vendor and any State agency, to include information provided in Vendor's proposal;
 - 4) For the unavailability of funds appropriated or available to the ADOC. The ADOC will use its best efforts to secure sufficient appropriations to fund the Contract. However, obligations of the ADOC hereunder will cease immediately, without penalty or further payment being required, if the Alabama Legislature fails to make an appropriation sufficient to pay such obligation. The ADOC will determine whether amounts appropriated are sufficient. The ADOC will give Selected Vendor notice of insufficient funding as soon as practicable after the ADOC becomes aware of the insufficiency. Selected Vendor's obligation to perform will cease upon receipt of the notice; and,
 - 5) For convenience of the ADOC.
- aa) Should Selected Vendor at any time during the course the Contract fail to perform the services according to the specifications required in this RFP or the resulting Contract with promptness and

diligence, the ADOC will have the option, after forty-eight (48) hours written notice to Selected Vendor by registered mail, return receipt requested, to Vendor's point of contact, to take any one or more of the following actions:

- 1) Withhold any monies then or next due to Selected Vendor;
 - 2) Provide such materials, supplies, equipment, and labor as may be necessary to complete said work and bring the rendition of the services up to the specification and standards required in this RFP or the Contract, and pay for same. Selected Vendor will immediately remit the amount so paid upon presentation of documentation from the ADOC; or
 - 3) Terminate the Contract, consistent with Sections 2.2(z), 2.2(aa), or 2.2(bb).
- bb) The ADOC reserves the right to cancel and terminate any Contract, in part or in whole, without penalty, upon thirty (30) days written notice to Selected Vendor. Any Contract cancellation notice shall not relieve Selected Vendor of the obligation to return any and all documents or data provided or generated as a result of this RFP and the resulting Contract.
- cc) If the ADOC terminates for convenience, the ADOC will pay Selected Vendor for services satisfactorily provided and for authorized expenses incurred up to the time of termination.
- dd) Any notice given to the ADOC under the Contract will be submitted in a timely manner.
- ee) Notices will be mailed to the Alabama Department of Corrections, Attn: General Counsel, 301 South Ripley Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36104, or P.O. Box 301501, Montgomery, Alabama 36130. Notices to Selected Vendor will be mailed to the address shown in its submitted proposal, unless otherwise specified in the resulting Contract. Notices will be sent by registered mailed, return receipt requested.
- ff) Parties agree to fully cooperate with one another for the successful pursuit of their respective and mutual interests. Parties will share information and provide timely notification to one another in the event of a claim against either party. There will be no settlement by Selected Vendor of any claim arising out of the performance of the Contract without consultation with the ADOC.

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SECTION III

STATEMENT AND SCOPE OF WORK

Selected Vendor must be available to the ADOC on an as needed basis to provide and deliver to the ADOC: public information and public relations services and communications assistance and consultation; public involvement and community relations services on selected projects and other thematic campaigns; marketing plans; and assistance with statewide/regional campaigns and issues. These services are sought to support the Department's recruitment initiatives and public relations engagements, transparency with and response to stakeholders, and defense of pending or threatened litigation. As it relates to litigation, Selected Vendor will also be required to work with litigation experts, attorneys, and/or other public relations and marketing firms to assist the ADOC in defense of litigation or pending litigation and in public communications related to the subject or status of litigation.

In responding to this Section of the RFP, Selected Vendor must provide examples of previous work or a description of the services rendered to previous clients as indicated below and describe its methodology for providing the services as further described in Section III.

Selected Vendor must also describe its experience in providing services to other correctional, law enforcement, and/or criminal justice organizations or agencies. Expertise in these areas is a critical component of the services requested in this RFP.

3.1 Public Information Campaigns

Selected Vendor must provide, develop, and implement, in close coordination with ADOC personnel, public information and community relations strategies, and grassroots campaigns using earned news media, paid media, print, outdoor, digital/online, and other communication formats or methodologies for the following projects:

- a) Communications Strategy;
- b) Pending litigation and/or threatened litigation, as deemed appropriate by the ADOC;
- c) Stakeholder Reports/Transparency; and,
- d) Other special projects, programs, and initiatives identified as relevant and essential to ADOC's mission.

3.2 News Media and Community Relations

Selected Vendor must:

- a) Advise and assist in the development of news media services, including earned media services, through strategic planning, key message development, and support for specific projects or overall ADOC activities including, but not limited to:

- 1) Developing a communications strategy and talking points on specific projects or issues;
 - 2) Developing news releases for ADOC approval and distribution; and,
 - 3) Assisting and advising the ADOC regarding daily media inquiries.
- b) Provide communications and media training to ADOC personnel when needed;
- c) Develop a media response protocol;
- d) Advise on crisis communication including, but not limited to:
- 1) Developing, maintaining, and exercising proper crisis communications plans as may be needed;
 - 2) Working with the ADOC during a crisis situation, to include issues analysis and development of key messages and communication strategies relating to internal and external messaging;
 - 3) Providing expert advice and support when working with litigation or threatened litigation;
 - 4) Providing expert advice and support when working with the legislature or reviewing legislation;
 - 5) Advising on engagement with stakeholders to maintain credibility, transparency, and strengthen relationships; and,
 - 6) Conducting post-crisis analysis to assess the ADOC's response during and after a crisis.
- e) Help plan, support, and/or provide:
- 1) Media Responses and background information;
 - 2) News conferences or informal briefings;
 - 3) Awareness tracking;
 - 4) Editorial tours; and,
 - 5) Community advisory meetings.
- f) Provide support, planning, and on-site assistance for special events including, but not limited to:
- 1) Event planning, coordination, and management support;
 - 2) Coordination of local logistics to include invitations, guest lists, and site selection;

- 3) Speech writing and other messaging, as requested;
 - 4) Production of event-related collateral materials; and,
 - 5) News media relations to include, spokesperson services.
- g) Plan, manage, and assist with community outreach efforts for selected projects. This includes, at a minimum:
- 1) Supporting services for the public involvement and project development processes; and
 - 2) Assisting with start-up and maintaining community outreach efforts, to include community outreach groups.
- h) Assist with Social Media Efforts. This includes, but is not limited to:
- 1) Development of weekly and monthly content calendar for posting;
 - 2) Monitoring and auditing social media accounts;
 - 3) Development of a social media response strategy protocol;
 - 4) Development of a social media strategy including, but not limited to,
 - i. Providing social media content development and posting;
 - ii. Providing social media content management and planning;
 - 5) Host a monthly conference call discussing trends, analytics, and future post ideas; and
 - 6) As needed, running social media reports on specific topics.

3.3 Internal ADOC Communications

Selected Vendor must assist with development of content and help to coordinate logistics for internal messages and video messages intended for ADOC employees, as well as the ADOC inmate population.

3.4 Branding

Selected Vendor must assist in branding efforts through, at a minimum, the following methods:

- a) Maintaining brand consistency through all publications and website development;
- b) Developing graphics for marketing material items including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Video development;

- 2) Social graphic development;
 - 3) Pamphlets;
 - 4) Posters;
 - 5) Flyers;
 - 6) Post Cards;
 - 7) Promotional Items;
 - 8) Job fair equipment; and
 - 9) Vehicle Wraps.
- c) Developing, conducting, and evaluating Annual ADOC staff surveys; and
 - d) Establishing target audience guides by region based on Departmental needs.

3.5 Other Services

- a) Selected Vendor must have the ability to provide the following services:
 - 1) Photography;
 - 2) Videography;
 - 3) TV/radio production;
 - 4) Graphic design including, but not limited to, info graphics;
 - 5) Web site development;
 - 6) Targeted e-mail or social media campaigns; and,
 - 7) Internal and external publications.
- b) Selected Vendor must provide a brief, detailed description of prior services and supporting documentation - by way of example - demonstrating Vendor's ability to provide the following services:
 - 1) Public opinion research to assist with the development (and assessment) of communication strategies and messaging through polling, focus groups, and other means;
 - 2) Monitoring and management of the use of social media to support projects and initiatives.

- Documentation may include, but not be limited to, monitoring reports and calendars;
- 3) Assistance in any litigation or threatened litigation and pre-litigation negotiations, including acting as an expert witness; and,
 - 4) Consulting, creative, communications and/or public relations services in support of projects, programs, or initiatives.
- c) Selected Vendor must provide and deliver assistance with other special projects and initiatives as identified and requested by the ADOC.

3.6 Reporting

Vendor must be capable of maintaining a detailed log indicating hours worked for services under this RFP. This report must be made available to the ADOC on a monthly basis.

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SECTION IV

CERTIFICATIONS

4.1 Liability and Indemnification

- a) Selected Vendor shall defend in any action at law, indemnify, and hold the ADOC, its officials, agents, and employees harmless against any and all claims arising from the provisions of the Contract, including, without limitation, any and all claims arising from:
- 1) Any breach or default on the part of Selected Vendor in the performance of the Contract;
 - 2) Any claims or losses for services rendered by Selected Vendor and/or by any person or firm performing or supplying services, materials, or supplies in connection with the performance of the Contract;
 - 3) Any claims or losses to any persons, including inmates, injured or property damaged from the acts or omissions of Selected Vendor, its officers, agents, or employees in the performance of the resulting contract by Selected Vendor;
 - 4) Any claims or losses by any person or firm injured or damaged by Selected Vendor, its trustees, officers, agents, or employees by the publication, translation, reproduction, delivery, performance, use, or disposition of any data processed under the resulting contract in a manner not authorized by the resulting contract, or by federal, state, or local regulations or statutes; and
 - 5) Any failure by Selected Vendor, its officers, agents, or employees to observe the Constitution or laws of the United States and/or the State of Alabama.

All costs, reasonable attorneys' fees, and liabilities incurred in or about any such claim, action, or proceeding brought thereon are the responsibility of Selected Vendor.

- b) If any action or proceeding is brought against the ADOC by reason of any such claim, Selected Vendor, upon notice from the ADOC, shall defend against such action by counsel satisfactory to the ADOC and the Attorney General for the State of Alabama. Said counsel shall not enter into any settlement contract with respect to any claim that may affect the ADOC without first obtaining approval of the ADOC and the Attorney General.

In defending the ADOC, its officials, agents, and employees, Selected Vendor shall advise and consult with the ADOC General Counsel's Office, which may, in its discretion, enter any legal proceeding on behalf of the ADOC, its officials, agents, or employees.

Said obligations shall not be applicable to any claim, injury, death, or damage to property arising solely out of any act or omission on the part of the ADOC, its officials, agents, servants, or independent Selected Vendors (other than Selected Vendor), who are directly responsible to the ADOC.

4.2 Insurance Coverage

- a) Selected Vendor shall continuously maintain and pay for such insurance as will protect Selected Vendor, the State, the ADOC, its officers, agents, and employees from all claims, including death and claims based on violations of civil rights, arising from the services performed under the awarded contract and actions by a third party against Vendor as a result of the awarded contract. Coverage required must also include, but not be limited to, Comprehensive General Liability, Worker's Compensation, and Employee's Liability. Before signing the contract, Selected Vendor must file with the ADOC a certificate from Selected Vendor's insurer showing the amounts of insurance carried and the risk covered thereby. Selected Vendor must carry general liability insurance coverage with two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) combined single limit for personal injury and property damage that incorporates said coverage for all of Selected Vendor's employees and sub-vendors. This coverage is required to extend to services performed at any facility where services will be provided under the contract.
- b) Selected Vendor will also maintain public liability, casualty, and auto insurance in sufficient amounts to protect the ADOC from liability for acts of Selected Vendor and risks and indemnities assumed by Selected Vendor in accordance with State law. If Selected Vendor does not have minimum coverage for bodily injury – including two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) per person and five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) per occurrence and, for property damage, one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) per occurrence – Selected Vendor must inform the ADOC and seek written permission for lesser coverage.
- c) All insurance policies required under this Contract, except for policies relating to Selected Vendor's Worker's Compensation claims, must name the ADOC as being an additional insured or loss payee and as entitled to all notices under the policies. All certificates of insurance shall contain the following provision: *The coverage provided shall not be canceled, reduced, or allowed to lapse unless and until the ADOC has received at least ten (10) days written notice.* At least thirty (30) days prior to each policy anniversary date, Selected Vendor shall provide the ADOC with renewal information and any changes in coverage.

4.3 Bribery Convictions

Selected Vendor certifies compliance, or agreement to comply, with the following legal requirement(s) and that it is not barred from being awarded a contract or subcontract due to a violation of these requirements or an inability or unwillingness to comply with these requirements:

- a) No person or business entity will be awarded a contract or subcontract if that person or business entity:
 - 1) Has been convicted under the laws of Alabama, or any other state or federal law, of bribery or attempting to bribe an officer or employee of the State of Alabama or any other state in that officer's or employee's official capacity; or
 - 2) Has made an admission of guilt of such conduct that is a matter of record but has not been prosecuted for such conduct.

- b) No business will be barred from contracting with the ADOC as a result of the bribery conviction of any employee or agent of the business if the employee or agent is no longer employed by the business, and:
 - 1) The business has been finally adjudicated not guilty; or,
 - 2) The business demonstrates to the ADOC that the commission of the offense was not authorized, requested, commanded, or performed by a director, officer, or a high managerial agent on behalf of the business.
- c) When an official, agent, or employee of a business committed the bribery or attempted bribery on behalf of the business and pursuant to the direction or authorization of a responsible official of the business, the business will be chargeable with the conduct.

4.4 Felony Conviction

No person or business entity, or officer or director of such business entity, convicted of a felony is eligible to do business with the ADOC from the date of conviction until three (3) years after the date of completion of the sentence for such felony, unless no person held responsible by a prosecutorial office for the facts upon which the conviction was based continues to have any involvement with the business.

4.5 Inducements

Any person who offers or pays any money or valuables to any person to induce him/her not to submit a proposal in response to this RFP is guilty of a felony. Any person who accepts money or other valuables for not submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or who withholds a proposal in consideration of the promise for the payment of money or other valuables, is guilty of a felony. Selected Vendor certifies that it will not take part in any such conduct.

4.6 Reporting Anticompetitive Practices

When, for any reason, Selected Vendor or a designee suspect collusion or other anticompetitive practice among any vendor(s) or employee(s) of the ADOC, a notice of the relevant facts will be transmitted to the Alabama Attorney General and the ADOC Commissioner's Office. This includes reporting any chief procurement officer, State purchasing agency, designee, or executive officer who willfully uses or allows the use of specifications, requests for proposal documents, proprietary competitive information, proposals, contracts, or selection information to compromise the fairness or integrity of the procurement or contract process, or any current or former elected or appointed State official or State employee who knowingly uses confidential information, available only by virtue of that office or employment, for actual or anticipated gain for themselves or another person.

4.7 Confidentiality and Use of Work Product

- a) Confidentiality. Any documents or information obtained by Vendor from the ADOC in connection with this RFP or Contract will be kept confidential and will not be provided to any third party unless the ADOC approves disclosure in writing. All work products produced under the RFP including, but not limited to, documents, reports, information, documentation of any sort, and ideas, whether preliminary or final, will become and remain the property of the ADOC. Any

patent, copyright, or other intellectual ideas, concepts, methodologies, processes, inventions, and tools (including computer hardware and software, where applicable) that Selected Vendor previously developed and brings to the ADOC in furtherance of performance of the Contract will remain the property of Selected Vendor. Selected Vendor grants to the ADOC a nonexclusive license to use and employ such software, ideas, concepts, methodologies, processes, inventions, and tools solely within its enterprise.

- b) Selected Vendor will, at its expense, defend the ADOC against all claims, asserted by any person, that anything provided by Selected Vendor infringes a patent, copyright, trade secret, or other intellectual property right and will, without limitation, pay the costs, damages, and attorney fees awarded against the ADOC in any such action, or pay any settlement of such action or claim. Each party agrees to notify the other promptly on any matters to which this provision may apply and to cooperate with each other in connection with such defense or settlement. If a preliminary or final judgment is obtained against the ADOC for its use or operation of the items provided by Selected Vendor hereunder, or any part thereof, by reason of any alleged infringement, Selected Vendor will, at its expense, either:

- 1) modify the item so that it becomes non-infringing;
- 2) procure for the ADOC the right to continue to use the item;
- 3) substitute for the infringing item other item(s) having at least equivalent capability; or
- 4) refund to the ADOC an amount equal to the price paid, less reasonable usage from installation acceptance through cessation of use, which amount will be calculated on a useful life not less than five (5) years, and plus any additional costs the ADOC may incur to acquire substitute supplies or services.

4.8 Indemnity

Selected Vendor will, at its expense, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the ADOC against all claims, asserted by any person, that anything provided by Selected Vendor infringes a patent, copyright, trade secret, or other intellectual property right and will, without limitation, pay the costs, damages, and attorney fees awarded against the ADOC in any such action, or pay any settlement of such action or claim. Each party agrees to notify the other promptly on any matters to which this provision may apply and to cooperate with each other in connection with such defense or settlement. If a preliminary or final judgment is obtained against the ADOC for its use or operation of the items provided by Selected Vendor hereunder, or any part thereof, by reason of any alleged infringement, Selected Vendor will, at its expense, either:

- 1) modify the item so that it becomes non-infringing;
- 2) procure for the ADOC the right to continue to use the item;
- 3) substitute for the infringing item other item(s) having at least equivalent capability;
- 4) refund to the ADOC an amount equal to the price paid, less reasonable usage from installation acceptance through cessation of use, which amount will be calculated on a useful life not less than five (5) years, and plus any additional costs the ADOC may incur to acquire substitute

supplies or services; or

5) pay damages or cost of settlement.

4.9 Warranty

- a) Selected Vendor warrants that all services will be performed in a good and professional manner.
- b) Selected Vendor warrants that it has the title to, or the right to allow the ADOC to use, the supplies and services being provided and that the ADOC will have use of such supplies and services without suit, trouble, or hindrance from Vendor or third parties. This is to ensure that no infringements, prohibitions, or restrictions are in force that would interfere with the use of such supplies and services that would leave the ADOC liable.

4.10 Compliance

All work completed under the resulting contract must be in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. Selected Vendor certifies that it is in compliance, and will remain in compliance, with all federal, state, and local laws as well as all pertinent ADOC regulations in the performance of any prospective contract including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Comply with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- b) Comply with the nondiscrimination clause contained in Section 202, Executive Order 11246, as amended by Executive Order 11375, relative to Equal Employment Opportunity for all persons with regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, and the implementing rules and regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor.
- c) Comply with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), the requirements imposed by the applicable H.E.W. regulation (45 C.F.R. Part 84), and all guidelines and interpretations issued pursuant thereto.
- d) Refrain from unlawful discrimination in employment and undertake affirmative action to assure equality of employment opportunity and eliminate the effects of past discrimination.
- e) Comply with the regulations, procedures, and requirements of the ADOC concerning equal employment opportunities and affirmative action.
- f) Provide such information with respect to its employees and applicants for employment.
- g) Have written sexual harassment policies that comply with the ADOC's policy, to include, at a minimum, the following information:
 - 1) the definition of sexual harassment;
 - 2) the illegality of sexual harassment;
 - 3) Selected Vendor's internal complaint process, including penalties;

- 4) the legal recourse, investigative, and complaint process available through Selected Vendor;
 - 5) directions on how to contact Selected Vendor; and
 - 6) protection against retaliation.
- h) Selected Vendor is currently enrolled with the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) in the E-verify system, and will not knowingly hire or continue to employ a person(s) who are not either citizens of the United States or person(s) who are not in proper and legal immigration status authorizing them to be employed for pay in the United States.
 - i) Selected Vendor will include a provision in all subcontracts that requires all subcontractors to utilize the E-Verify system to verify employment eligibility of all persons employed during the contract term. If requested, subcontractor must provide documentation as identified above.
 - j) In compliance with the Beason-Hammond Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act as amended and codified in Ala. Code Section 31-13-1, *et seq.*, by signing this Agreement, the contracting parties affirm, for the duration of this Agreement, that they will not violate federal immigration law or knowingly employ, hire for employment, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama. Furthermore, a contracting party found to be in violation of this provision shall be deemed in breach of any resulting contract and shall be responsible for all damages resulting therefrom.
 - k) Selected Vendor will maintain a drug-free workplace. Selected Vendor certifies that no individual engaged in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of any illegal drug or controlled substance will be eligible for employment by Selected Vendor under the resulting contract.
 - l) Selected Vendor acknowledges and understands that any employee or subcontractor will be subject to, and will comply with, all security regulations and procedures of the ADOC, the ADOC Information Systems Division, and the Alabama Office of Information Technologies.
 - m) Any Selected Vendor employee or subcontractor who enters an ADOC facility is subject to a background check and security check of his/her person and personal property (including his/her vehicle), and may be prohibited from entering the facility in accordance with ADOC regulations. Additionally, any Selected Vendor employee found to have violated any security regulation may be barred from entering any ADOC facility.
 - n) Selected Vendor must have appropriate certifications, permits, and licenses as required by State and Federal law. Selected Vendor and its subcontractors will be responsible for obtaining any and all required governmental permits, consents, and authorizations.
 - o) Selected Vendor shall comply with Alabama Code Section 14-11-31, as well as 28 C.F.R. Part 115, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (“PREA”). The ADOC has a Zero Tolerance Policy toward all forms of custodial sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment. See Administrative Regulation 454, Inmate Sexual Assault and Harassment Awareness (Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)). Any type of conduct – including suspected conduct – that falls within the context of custodial sexual misconduct/sexual abuse, as defined by either the State or Federal laws referenced above, shall be reported immediately to the Department’s PREA Director.

- p) In compliance with Act 2016-312, as codified Alabama Code Section 41-16-5, Selected Vendor shall certify that it is not currently engaged in, and will not engage in, the boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction with which this state can enjoy open trade.

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SECTION V

INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS / PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

5.1 **Deadlines**

- a) Deadlines and other critical dates in this RFP have been provided in Attachment D. For any discrepancies between Attachment D and the dates included in this RFP, Attachment D will prevail.
- b) Sealed Proposals must be received **by 4:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, on January 13, 2022**, at the below listed address. Responses are to be submitted in a sealed envelope and clearly marked, on the external packaging, "RFP 2021-03: Public Relations and Issues Management Services." See Attachment B.

Proposals delivered directly by UPS, FEDEX, or other delivery services:

Alabama Department of Corrections
Legal Division
Attn: Mary-Coleman Roberts
301 South Ripley Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Responses sent via United States Postal Service:

Alabama Department of Corrections
Legal Division
Attn: Mary-Coleman Roberts
P.O. Box 301501
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

- 1) All proposals received after the appointed date and hour for receipt, whether by mail or otherwise, will be returned unopened. The time of receipt shall be determined by the time received in the ADOC Commissioner's Office. Vendors have the sole responsibility for assuring that proposals are received in the ADOC Commissioner's Office by the designated date and time.
- 2) Whether proposals are mailed, hand delivered, or directly delivered by express mail, they must be delivered to the ADOC Commissioner's Office at the address shown above. Hand delivered proposals must be delivered in ample time to allow for security check-in at the front desk of the Criminal Justice Center and delivery to the ADOC Commissioner's Office prior to the closing time for the solicitation.
- 3) Faxed, electronic, or oral proposals will not be accepted.

- 4) Due to the potential delay that may be caused by the processes of the State Mail Room, through which the United States Postal Service delivers mail to State agencies, it is not recommended that this service be used for short-term or overnight deliveries.
- c) If any prospective Vendor has questions about the specifications or other solicitation documents, that Vendor must submit the questions to the attention of the Single Point of Contact, Mary-Coleman Roberts, via electronic mail at MaryColeman.Roberts@doc.alabama.gov, **by 4:00 pm, Central Standard Time, on December 10, 2021**. Any e-mail should include in the subject line “ADOC RFP 2021-03: Public Relations and Issues Management Services.” It is Vendor’s responsibility to verify receipt of the questions.
- d) Written Responses to those questions received by the ADOC will be posted on the ADOC website, at www.doc.alabama.gov, by **December 17, 2021**. Any revisions to this RFP will be made only by addendum issued by the ADOC.

5.2 Proposal Preparation

- a) The Vendor Proposal Form (Attachment A) must be used for submitting proposals. The Proposal Form must be completed and submitted with Vendor’s proposal. **All documents referenced in Vendor Proposal Form must also be included with Vendor’s proposal. Vendor’s Cost Proposal shall be submitted in a separately sealed envelope. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the process.** The certification located at the bottom of the Form should be completed, signed by an official that has the authority to bind Vendor, and notarized.
- b) In order to be considered for selection, Vendor shall submit a complete response to this RFP. Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so the ADOC may properly evaluate Vendor’s capabilities to provide the required services.
- c) Vendors are required to comply with the following instructions:
 - 1) Proposals shall be signed and notarized by an authorized representative of Vendor. All information requested must be submitted. Failure to submit all information requested may result in the ADOC requiring prompt submission of missing information, giving a lower score in evaluation of the proposal, or rejection of the proposal by the ADOC.
 - 2) Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.
 - 3) Proposals should be organized in the order in which the requirements are presented in Attachment A and Section 5.8 of this RFP. **All pages of the proposal should be numbered.** Each paragraph in the proposal should reference the corresponding paragraph from Attachment A or Section III of this RFP, as applicable. It is also helpful to repeat the text of the requirement as it appears in Attachment A or Section III of this RFP, as applicable. Proposals that are not organized in this manner risk elimination from consideration or a lower score in the evaluation of the proposal if the evaluators are unable to find where the RFP requirements are specifically addressed.

- 4) The ADOC takes its responsibilities under the State of Alabama's Open Records Law very seriously. If the Vendor considers any portion of the documents, data, or records submitted in response to this solicitation to be confidential, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to public disclosure, Vendor must, in addition to the required copies below, also provide the ADOC with a separate, redacted copy of its proposal on a disc in PDF format, marked clearly as "REDACTED COPY," and briefly describe in a separate writing, as to each redacted item, the grounds for claiming exemption from the public records law. This redacted copy shall be provided to the ADOC at the same time Vendor enters its submissions and must only exclude or redact those exact portions that are claimed confidential, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure.

Vendor shall be responsible for defending its determination that the redacted portions of its submissions are confidential, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure. Furthermore, Vendor shall protect, defend, and indemnify the ADOC for any and all claims arising from or relating to Vendor's determination that the redacted portions of its proposal are confidential, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure. All of the above shall be acknowledged in Vendor's separate writing that must accompany the "REDACTED COPY."

If Vendor fails to submit a Redacted Copy with its proposal, the ADOC is authorized to produce the entire document(s), data, and/or records submitted by the Vendor in response to any public records request.

5.2 Oral Presentation

The ADOC may, at its sole option, elect to require oral presentation(s) by Vendors being considered for award. This provides an opportunity for the ADOC to ask questions and Vendors to clarify or elaborate on their proposals. This is a fact finding and explanation session only and does not include negotiation. The ADOC will schedule the time and location of these presentations, if required.

5.4 Request to Modify or Withdraw Proposal

Vendor may make a written request to modify or withdraw the proposal at any time prior to opening. No oral modifications will be allowed. Such requests must be addressed and labeled in the same manner as the original proposal and plainly marked Modification to, or Withdrawal of, Proposal. Only written requests received by the ADOC prior to the scheduled opening time will be accepted. The ADOC will correct the proposal after opening.

5.5 Vendor's Representation

Vendor, by submission of a proposal, represents that it has read and understands the solicitation document and specifications and has familiarized itself with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations that may affect the cost, progress, or performance of the work.

The failure or omission of any Vendor to receive or examine any form, instrument, addendum, or other document, or to acquaint itself with conditions existing at the sites, shall in no way relieve Vendor from any obligations with respect to its proposal or to the resulting contract.

5.6 Identification of Proposal Envelope

- a) Envelopes/boxes containing proposals shall be sealed and marked in the lower left-hand corner of the external packaging with the solicitation number, “RFP 2021-03: Public Relations and Issues Management Services,” hour, and due date of the proposal. A sample of a return mailing label for identifying the package as a sealed proposal has been provided as Attachment B. This format should be used on your proposal packaging. It is further suggested that, if you submit your proposal by a courier such as FedEx or UPS, and place your sealed envelope inside the courier’s envelope, that you clearly mark the courier’s envelope with the same information to prevent premature opening of the proposal.
- b) No other correspondence or other proposals should be placed in the envelope.
- c) Envelopes that are prematurely opened due to Vendor’s failure to comply with this Section will not be considered. The ADOC assumes no responsibility for the premature opening of any envelope not properly identified.

5.7 Suspected Errors/Clarification

Consistent with Section 5.1(c), if Vendor suspects an error, omission, or discrepancy in this solicitation, Vendor must notify Ms. Mary-Coleman Roberts, ADOC’s Single Point of Contact, via e-mail at MaryColeman.Roberts@doc.alabama.gov, and such notification must be received by the ADOC **by 4:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, on December 10, 2021**. The subject line of the e-mail should read “RFP 2021-03: Public Relations and Issues Management Services.” The ADOC will issue written instructions, if appropriate, by December 17, 2021.

If Vendor considers any part of this RFP unclear, Vendor is expected to make a written request for clarification by no later than **4:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, on December 10, 2021**. In the ADOC’s response, the ADOC will provide the request for clarification followed by a statement of clarification by December 17, 2021. A copy of the responses will be posted on the ADOC website at www.doc.alabama.gov.

5.8 Submission Requirements

One original and six (6) hard copies of the proposal must be submitted to the ADOC. This does not include the “REDACTED COPY” Vendor may choose to submit. See Section 5.2. Each copy of the proposal should be bound or contained in a single volume where practical. All documentation submitted with the proposal should be contained in that single volume. **Vendor may also submit a disc containing an electronic copy of the complete proposal in readable PDF format as well as the “REDACTED COPY,” if desired.** The ADOC will not accept oral, electronic, or faxed proposals. Vendor shall make no other distribution of the proposals.

The following is required in the proposal:

All vendors must fully complete Attachment A, Vendor Proposal Form, in submitting their proposed prices and certifying acceptance of the terms and conditions associated with this RFP. The Vendor Proposal Form must be signed and notarized in order to be considered. If Vendor is a corporation, the proposal must be submitted in the name of the corporation, not simply in the corporation's trade name. In addition, Vendor must indicate the corporate title of the individual

signing the proposal. **Copies of any forms listed in Attachment A must also be submitted.**

Vendor should submit its Cost Proposal in accordance with the instructions provided in Section IV of Attachment A. This **Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separately sealed envelope** and will not be opened until after the substantive proposal has been evaluated by the committee.

Failure to submit a separate Cost Proposal may result in a rejection of Vendor's proposal or disqualification of Vendor from continued participation in the process.

5.9 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by the ADOC using the following criteria:

Criteria	Percentage
General Qualifications	Pass /Fail
Consultation Experience (Statement and Scope of Work)	20%
Corrections, Law Enforcement, and/or Criminal Justice Experience	25%
Suitability of Approach/Methodology	25%
Total Cost	30%
Total Possible	100 %

- a) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the ADOC reserves the right to award on the basis of cost alone or to accept or reject any or all bids if it is determined to be in the best interest of the State.
- b) Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process may be rejected and not considered further.
- c) The State may, at its sole option, elect to require oral presentation(s) by Vendors clearly in consideration for award. The State reserves the right to amend the evaluation criteria to allow for scoring of the oral presentation(s).
- d) Proposals that do not meet the minimum threshold of the technical proposal, as pre-established by the ADOC Evaluation Committee, will not be deemed qualified, and the cost proposal will be returned unopened.
- e) The ADOC Evaluation Committee will present written findings to the ADOC Commissioner who will make the final selection.

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ATTACHMENT A VENDOR PROPOSAL FORM

Failure to complete and provide this Form with the proposal submission will result in rejection of your proposal. For any portions for which no response is necessary, please mark the response as “N/A.”

I. General Qualifications

- a) Provide Vendor’s contact information, including company name (if applicable), primary contact, mailing address (including city, state, and zip code), phone number, and e-mail address*.

*Note: The e-mail address may be used for formal communications from the ADOC.

- b) Indicate the length of time you have been in business providing this type of good or service:

Years: _____ Months: _____

- c) If Vendor is a business entity, provide Vendor’s FIN or FEI Number and Vendor’s Alabama Business License Number. If Vendor is an individual, Vendor must provide a statement that, upon award of a contract, Vendor agrees to take the steps required to sign up with the Alabama State Comptroller in order to receive payment.¹
- d) Provide a list of all clients lost within the last three (3) years, including a contact name, title, telephone number, and e-mail address, if available. In addition, state the length of service at the account and reason for loss. If your company has not lost any such clients in the last three (3) years, indicate so by stating, “[Vendor] has not lost any clients.”
- e) If Vendor is a business entity, provide a statement that Vendor’s corporate office is registered with the Secretary of State to do business in the State of Alabama or provide proof of having submitted an application to do business with the assurance that Vendor will be licensed prior to assuming the contract.
- f) **Complete, sign, notarize, and attach the “Disclosure Statement” as required by Act 2001- 955.** This statement is required to be completed and filed with all proposals, bids, contracts, or grant proposals to the State of Alabama in excess of \$5,000. The form, along with instructions, can be found at www.ago.alabama.gov (click on “Resources”). At least one (1) original should be submitted. For your convenience, a copy of the form has been provided as part of Attachment C.
- g) **Provide a complete copy of Vendor’s Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Department of Homeland Security showing enrollment in the E-verify system** (this can be printed from your business’s screen once logged in to E-verify).

¹ This requirement is separate and apart from the registration with the Secretary of State as provided in subsection (e).

- h) **Complete and attach the “CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE BEASON-HAMMON ALABAMA TAXPAYER AND CITIZEN PROTECTION ACT”** as required by Alabama Code Section 31-13-1, *et seq.* For your convenience, a copy of the certification form has been provided as part of Attachment C.
- i) **Complete and attached the “CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH ACT 2016-312”** as required by said Act. For your convenience, a copy of the certification form has been provided as part of Attachment C.
- j) **Complete and attach Vendor’s W-9** as required by the Alabama Policies and Procedures Manual. A fillable form may be accessed at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>.
- k) Read, expressly agree, and certify that Vendor has and will comply with all Terms and Conditions as set forth in **Section II** of this RFP. If there are any exceptions requested, state so in writing.
- l) Read, expressly agree, and certify that Vendor has and will comply with all Certifications as set forth in **Section IV** of this RFP. If there are any exceptions requested, state so in writing.
- m) Provide a statement as to professional standing including, but not limited to, any pending controversies, law suits, claims, or other outstanding matters. In none exists, indicate so by stating, “[Vendor] has no pending controversies or claims.”
- n) Provide a statement as to the financial standing of the firm.

II. Consultation Experience

Provide, at a minimum, the information requested below. (If any correctional service functions will be subcontracted, submit a separate response for each sub-Vendor):

- a) Vendor’s experience in providing public relations, issues management, marketing, and communication services as set forth in this RFP. Provide a list of all governmental entities for which Vendor has provided similar services in the past five (5) years with specific timeframes specified in the response. For each entity, provide the entity’s name, contact person, telephone number, email address, and general description of the services provided to that client.
- b) Vendor’s experience in providing public relations, issues management, marketing, and communications services for correctional, law enforcement, and/or criminal justice organizations or agencies. Provide a list of all correctional, law enforcement, and/or criminal justice entities for which Vendor has provided services in the past five (5) years with specific timeframes specified in the response. For each entity, provide the entity’s name, contact person, telephone number, email address, and general description of the services provided to that client.
- c) Provide names, qualifications, certifications, and experience of all personnel that will be utilized, both in-house and those to be acquired from outside sources, to perform services as outlined in this RFP.

- d) Provide a statement of availability and adequacy, in both number and quality of remaining staff, to perform all other functions included in this RFP.
- e) Indicate specific features that distinguish Vendor from other vendors in the field.
- f) Provide three (3) references, if possible, from current or former clients. The references should attest to the experience of the Vendor in managing similar service contracts for governmental correctional, law enforcement, and criminal justice entities. For each reference, the following information must be included: Company Name and Address; Contact Name, Title, Phone Number, and E-mail; Dates of Service to Client; and a description of the supplies or services provided.
- g) Provide Vendor's internal method for dealing with problems and complaints presented by ADOC's employees, detailing at what point the problem would escalate to the next level of supervision or management.

III. Suitability of Approach

Provide a plan of operation to achieve the objectives as defined in Section III of this RFP, specifically addressing and referencing each item in Section III. This will assist with the evaluation process. **Note: In responding to this term, each paragraph in the proposal should reference the corresponding paragraph from Section III. It is also helpful to repeat the text of the requirement as it appears in Section III.**

IV. Cost

NOTE: This Section must be provided in a separate, sealed envelope. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

Vendor's Proposal shall include firm cost proposals for all services listed in this RFP, inclusive of all time, services, or resources needed:

- a) Provide a firm, fixed monthly cost for services to be rendered under this RFP as provided in RFP Sections 3.2(a), 3.2(h), and 3.3 in its entirety.
- b) Provide a firm, fixed hourly rate for services included in RFP Sections 3.1, 3.2(b) through 3.2(g), and 3.4. To do so, provide the hourly rate for the following disciplines:
 - 1) Media Communications Expert;
 - 2) Expert Witness Fees (limited to reviewing documents as designated by counsel and testifying in Court or deposition);
 - 3) Legislative Liaison;
 - 4) Videographer;

- 5) Photographer; and
 - 6) Administrative Support.
- c) Costs associated with Section 3.5 of this RFP shall be included in the bids provided above. No additional fees or costs will be paid by the ADOC with respect to hourly reporting and invoicing.
 - d) To the extent Vendor can demonstrate that payment of commissions would result in a lower cost to the ADOC consistent with Section 2.2(t)(2) of this RPF, Vendor should provide a percentage commission for the management of paid media buys. This cost should not include the proposed cost of the purchasing of paid media.
 - e) Travel shall be billed in accordance with the State of Alabama Fiscal Policies and Procedures manual, which can be found at <https://comptroller.alabama.gov/fiscal-policy-procedures/>. The ADOC shall not be billed for travel time by Selected Vendor.

The ADOC will not accept alternative cost proposals. Failure to provide a cost proposal in the above requested format may result in rejection of the proposal.

V. **Certification**

I/we agree to furnish the services as set forth in this proposal and guarantee that the services to be provided will meet or exceed all specifications, terms, conditions, and requirements herein. The undersigned offers and agrees to comply with all terms, conditions, and certifications as stated in this RFP and furnish the services at the prices provided with this signed proposal, or as mutually agreed upon after subsequent negotiation.

_____ Authorized Signature (ink)

_____ Authorized Name (typed)

_____ Title of Authorized Person

Sworn to and subscribed before me and given under my hand and official seal this the _____ day of _____, 20____.

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: _____

ATTACHMENT B
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION ENVELOPE LABEL SAMPLE
FOR DIRECT DELIVERY BY UPS OR FEDEX

Vendor's Name:
Vendor's Address:

State of Alabama
Department of Corrections
Legal Division
Attn: Mary-Coleman Roberts
301 South Ripley Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

ADOC Commissioner
RFP NUMBER – 2021-03
Public Relations and Issues Management Services
RFP Hour and Due Date:
4:00 p.m. CST, January 13, 2022.

ATTACHMENT C
DISCLOSURE STATEMENT & CERTIFICATE
OF COMPLIANCE FORMS



State of Alabama Disclosure Statement

Required by Article 3B of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975

ENTITY COMPLETING FORM

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

TELEPHONE NUMBER

STATE AGENCY/DEPARTMENT THAT WILL RECEIVE GOODS, SERVICES, OR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR GRANT AWARD

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

TELEPHONE NUMBER

This form is provided with:

☐ Contract ☐ Proposal ☐ Request for Proposal ☐ Invitation to Bid ☐ Grant Proposal

Have you or any of your partners, divisions, or any related business units previously performed work or provided goods to any State Agency/Department in the current or last fiscal year?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, identify below the State Agency/Department that received the goods or services, the type(s) of goods or services previously provided, and the amount received for the provision of such goods or services.

STATE AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	TYPE OF GOODS/SERVICES	AMOUNT RECEIVED

Have you or any of your partners, divisions, or any related business units previously applied and received any grants from any State Agency/Department in the current or last fiscal year?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, identify the State Agency/Department that awarded the grant, the date such grant was awarded, and the amount of the grant.

STATE AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	DATE GRANT AWARDED	AMOUNT OF GRANT

1. List below the name(s) and address(es) of all public officials/public employees with whom you, members of your immediate family, or any of your employees have a family relationship and who may directly personally benefit financially from the proposed transaction. Identify the State Department/Agency for which the public officials/public employees work. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

NAME OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL/EMPLOYEE	ADDRESS	STATE DEPARTMENT/AGENCY

2. List below the name(s) and address(es) of all family members of public officials/public employees with whom you, members of your immediate family, or any of your employees have a family relationship and who may directly personally benefit financially from the proposed transaction. Identify the public officials/public employees and State Department/Agency for which the public officials/public employees work. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

NAME OF FAMILY MEMBER	ADDRESS	NAME OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL/ PUBLIC EMPLOYEE	STATE DEPARTMENT/ AGENCY WHERE EMPLOYED
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If you identified individuals in items one and/or two above, describe in detail below the direct financial benefit to be gained by the public officials, public employees, and/or their family members as the result of the contract, proposal, request for proposal, invitation to bid, or grant proposal. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

Describe in detail below any indirect financial benefits to be gained by any public official, public employee, and/or family members of the public official or public employee as the result of the contract, proposal, request for proposal, invitation to bid, or grant proposal. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

List below the name(s) and address(es) of all paid consultants and/or lobbyists utilized to obtain the contract, proposal, request for proposal, invitation to bid, or grant proposal:

NAME OF PAID CONSULTANT/LOBBYIST	ADDRESS
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By signing below, I certify under oath and penalty of perjury that all statements on or attached to this form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further understand that a civil penalty of ten percent (10%) of the amount of the transaction, not to exceed \$10,000.00, is applied for knowingly providing incorrect or misleading information.

Signature _____ Date _____

Notary's Signature _____ Date _____ Date Notary Expires _____

Article 3B of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975 requires the disclosure statement to be completed and filed with all proposals, bids, contracts, or grant proposals to the State of Alabama in excess of \$5,000.

State of _____)
County of _____)

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE BEASON-HAMMON ALABAMA TAXPAYER AND CITIZEN PROTECTION ACT (ACT 2011-535, as amended by ACT 2012-491)

DATE: _____

RE Contract/Grant/Incentive (describe by number or subject):

_____ by and between
_____ (Contractor/Grantee) and
_____ (State Agency, Department or Public Entity)

The undersigned hereby certifies to the State of Alabama as follows:

1. The undersigned holds the position of _____ with the Contractor/Grantee named above, and is authorized to provide representations set out in this Certificate as the official and binding act of that entity, and has knowledge of the provisions of THE BEASON-HAMMON ALABAMA TAXPAYER AND CITIZEN PROTECTION ACT (ACT 2011-535 of the Alabama Legislature, as amended by ACT 2012-491) which is described herein as "the Act."

2. Using the following definitions from Section 3 of the Act, select and initial either (a) or (b), below, to describe the Contractor/Grantee's business structure.

BUSINESS ENTITY. Any person or group of persons employing one or more persons performing or engaging in any activity, enterprise, profession, or occupation for gain, benefit, advantage, or livelihood, whether for profit or not for profit.

a. Self-employed individuals, business entities filing articles of incorporation, partnerships, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, foreign corporations, foreign limited partnerships, and foreign limited liability companies authorized to transact business in this state, business trusts, and any business entity that registers with the Secretary of State.

b. Any business entity that possesses a business license, permit, certificate, approval, registration, charter, or similar form of authorization issued by the state, any business entity that is exempt by law from obtaining such a business license, and any business entity that is operating unlawfully without a business license.

EMPLOYER. Any person, firm, corporation, partnership, joint stock association, agent, manager, representative, foreman, or other person having control or custody of any employment, place of employment, or of any employee, including any person or entity employing any person for hire within the State of Alabama, including a public employer. This term shall not include the occupant of a household contracting with another person to perform casual domestic labor within the household.

____ (a) The Contractor/Grantee is a business entity or employer as those terms are defined in Section 3 of the Act.

____ (b) The Contractor/Grantee is not a business entity or employer as those terms are defined in Section 3 of the Act.

3. As of the date of this Certificate, the Contractor/Grantee does not knowingly employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama and hereafter it will not knowingly employ, hire for employment, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama;

4. The Contractor/Grantee is enrolled in E-Verify unless it is not eligible to enroll because of the rules of that program or other factors beyond its control.

Certified this _____ day of _____ 20____.

Name of Contractor/Grantee/Recipient

By: _____

Its _____

The above Certification was signed in my presence by the person whose name appears above, on this _____ day of _____ 20____.

WITNESS: _____

Printed Name of Witness

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH ACT 2016-312

DATE: _____

Re: Contract/Grant/Incentive (describe by number or subject):

_____ by and between _____
(Contractor/Grantee) and _____ (State Agency, Department or
Public Entity.

The undersigned hereby certifies to the State of Alabama as follows:

1. The undersigned holds the position of _____ with the Contractor/Grantee named above, and is authorized to provide representations set out in this Certificate as the official and binding act of that entity, and has knowledge of Alabama's Act 2016-312.
2. In compliance with Act 2016-312, the contractor hereby certifies that it is not currently engaged in, and will not engage in, the boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction with which this state can enjoy open trade.

Certified this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Name of Contractor/Grantee/Recipient

By: _____

Its: _____

The above Certification was signed in my presence by the person whose name appears above on this
_____ day of _____, 20____.

Witness: _____

Printed Name of Witness

ATTACHMENT D

RFP CRITICAL DATES

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Issue RFP	December 1, 2021
Deadline for Submittal of Questions	December 10, 2021 by 4:00 p.m., CST
Answers to Questions Posted on ADOC Website	December 17, 2021
Deadline for Submittal of Proposals	January 13, 2022, by 4:00 p.m., CST
Opening Day for Proposals	January 14, 2022, 10:00 a.m., CST
Notification of Selected Vendor	February 11, 2022
Contract Review Deadline	March 2022 (estimated)
Contract Review Meeting	April 2022 (estimated)
Target Implementation Date	April 19, 2022 (estimated)

*These dates are best estimates at this time and are subject to change.